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courage is contagious

Viewing cable 09NICOSIA77, CYPRUS: GOVERNMENT SEEKING MUTUALLY-PALATABLE END

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09NICOSIA77**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09NICOSIA77	2009-01-29 14:50	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Nicosia

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.tanea.gr>

VZCZCXRO8138
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RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1336

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 000077

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR, NEA, ISN, P

REF: A. NICOSIA 75

[B.](#) NICOSIA 73

[C.](#) NICOSIA 58

Classified By: Ambassador Frank C. Urbancic, Reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

[¶1.](#) (C) Ship Status: M/V Monchegorsk remains at anchorage in the Limassol port. Cypriot maritime officials have conducted a cursory inspection, finding large quantities of high explosive on board. RoC officials promise a more thorough inspection is forthcoming.

[¶2.](#) (C) Diplomatic Activity: The Ambassador at 1545 hrs local (0845 DC) telephoned Presidential Diplomatic Coordinator Leonidas Pantelides seeking the latest on the M/V Monchegorsk recall. Pantelides responded that Cypriot officials were inspecting the ship now and "would find what you found." He was unsure what the government would do once it discovered military materiel, however. Pantelides made clear the RoC understood it could not let the ship reach Syria. Yet it also aimed to prevent Iranian/Syrian goods being stuck on its territory.

[¶3.](#) (C) Brainstorming, the RoC diplomat floated the possibility of transferring the cargo to the United Nations in some creative way. UNFICYP likely was out, owing to its restrictive mandate; also, transfer to UNFICYP likely would require bringing the materiel on land, which the government hoped to avoid. But might UNIFIL be a possibility? Pantelides ventured. That UN mission runs its sea operations out of Limassol. He questioned whether the Monchegorsk's haul could be transferred to a German ship operating under the UN flag, and taken out of Cyprus.

[¶4.](#) (C) Ambassador welcomed the creative thinking and promised to follow up with Washington. He emphasized that the aim of the USG was not to punish Cyprus, but to prevent an illegal Iranian arms export. Pantelides responded by noting he would continue to be in close communication with the Embassy. He would wait for any other U.S. proposals that might allow the RoC to remove the materiel from Cyprus without it ending up in Syria.

[¶5.](#) (C) Comment: The RoC is clearly feeling the heat and wants to avoid a confrontation with Syria and Iran. Pantelides worries, with reason, that the Monchegorsk incident will break soon into the contentious Cypriot press, and he is looking for a way out before it becomes an embarrassment to the government. From their perspective, some sort of UN cover would make "doing the right thing" easier and more palatable, since the very hardest political pill for the RoC to swallow would be off-loading the cargo on land while its final disposition is decided. We leave to Washington and New York experts the determination of whether Pantelides's UNIFIL idea, or some other arrangement involving the UN, will fly.

Urbancic